

Frederick County Sustainability Commission

Meeting Minutes

3rd Floor Meeting Room, Winchester Hall, 12 E. Church Street, Frederick, MD

September 16, 2009

3:00 pm

Present: Don Briggs, Steve Chafitz, Annmarie Creamer, Sally Fulmer, Lisa Gaver, Margie Lance; Rich Maranto, Lisa Orr, Winifred Palmer, Fred Ugast, Janice Wiles; Hilari Varnadore, staff

Others present: Honorable Carroll Jones (Brunswick), Drew Bowen (Middletown), Naomi Bowers (Frederick), Karen Gardner, Joanne Ivancic, Leah Jones and Tim Jones

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Hilari Varnadore called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

2. Administrative Items

Meeting Minutes: Margie made a motion to accept the minutes from August. Fred seconded. All voted in favor of accepting the meeting minutes as presented.

OES Updates: Hilari gave the commission an update on the internal Sustainable Action Team. She said that the team had its first meeting on September 15th and had organized into six sub-committees focusing on natural systems and green infrastructure; building standards and sustainable design; transportation alternatives; green purchasing; waste reduction and recycling; and renewable energy and conservation. She added that the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant award was reported to be coming by the end of September. A full-time staff person will be hired through the grant to lead the county's efforts in energy conservation and green building.

3. Commissioner Comments

Steve expressed a concern about the lack of commercial recycling. He had spoken with a business that was having trouble getting started. Annmarie reported that businesses can recycle, that it is often cheaper to recycle, and that a downtown Frederick pilot project is about to commence. Dave Helmecki, the county's commercial recycling coordinator, is committed to increasing awareness and implementation of business recycling in the county.

Drew Bowen stated that Middletown surveyed its businesses and learned that they favor a curbside recycling program. Mayor Jones said that Brunswick's businesses have access to recycling dumpsters.

Don noted an interest in the Energy Star Homes program. He said that there are 88,000 homes in Frederick County and we need to find ways to make them more energy efficient. The National Association of Home Builders has green standards that he would like to look at as a group.

Rich added that the Solar Home Tour is coming up October 3rd and 4th. There are 12 homes/locations in our area this year.

Lisa G. commented that there have been a lot of letters to the editor recently about recycling. She said that you can always get a larger 95 gallon container from the county if you need or you can put out additional bins. Margie said that she hopes the City of Frederick starts recycling more often and picking up trash less frequently. Winnie added that she lives in the county (not in a municipality) and has tried to get trash service every other week, but has not been successful in finding a hauler that will provide that service. Annmarie said that Homeowners Associations are finding that they save money by increasing recycling. Hilari noted that Phil Harris the director of the county's Solid Waste Department is interested in a food waste composting pilot. He said that the County Commissioners will likely forward single stream recycling to multi-family dwellings first.

Margie stated that she would like to see the Commission enact a paperless meeting policy. She said that she reviews items like minutes at home and makes a note if there is something that needs to be amended. Hilari noted that she had printed a few copies of materials in case someone needed for reference and placed agendas on the podium for the public. With the agenda and related documents and presentations on the screen, it is easy for most to follow along.

4. Bylaws

Margie and Fred proposed a draft set of bylaws for the Commission. There was some dialogue about the mission statement that is on the first page of the bylaws; Hilari suggested they table the discussion of mission since it was the next agenda item. Steve asked what the meaning of "with or without cause" was found at the top of page six under Removal. Rich provided an example illustrating if an officer were to speak out and embarrass the group it may be necessary to remove them as an officer of the Commission without cause. Cause could be subjective and removal without cause could be necessary in this case. The consensus of the group was that the bylaws were in great shape; they would wait for the mission statement discussion to then inject the adopted mission into the bylaws. Hilari added that once the commission accepted the bylaws, they would be sent to the County Attorney for review prior to presenting them to the Board of County Commissioners.

5. Elections

Elections were held for the positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Steve nominated Don for Chairman, Janice nominated Steve, and Lisa O. nominated Sally, who declined due to her commitment to her graduate program. Don Briggs was elected Chairman by paper ballot after each gave a short speech detailing why they would be an effective Chair.

Margie nominated Fred for Vice Chairman. Winnie nominated Steve, who declined. Sally nominated Rich, who also declined. Fred Ugast was declared Vice Chairman by the group.

Lisa O. asked Margie if she would be interested in Secretary and she declined due to her commitment as the Common Market's Board Chair. Margie instead nominated Annmarie for Secretary. As the only nominee, Annmarie Creamer accepted her new role.

The newly elected Officers of the Frederick County Sustainability Commission are: Don Briggs, Chairman; Fred Ugast, Vice Chairman; and Annmarie Creamer, Secretary.

6. Sustainability Commission Retreat

Don, Sally and Janice gave a brief overview of their discussions relative to a strategic planning retreat. They thought it could be useful to speak with another jurisdiction that has gone through a planning and evaluation process. Mayor Jones suggested speaking with a county, like Harford, that had municipalities within its boundaries. Howard County, which Don had already spoken with, does not have any incorporated municipalities. Janice noted that the six program areas the internal Sustainable Action Teams were working on could focus the efforts of the Commission; she envisioned a collaborative effort between the two bodies in shaping measurable goals for sustainability. Janice also suggested that members review the B-Sustainable website from the Seattle area.

There was some discussion on what the purpose and expected outcomes of the retreat were and whether or not the meeting should be facilitated. There was consensus from the group to hold a strategic planning retreat on November 11, 2009 which is the Veteran's Day holiday. Steve Chafitz offered his farm/house for the event. Hilari suggested the Browning Building at Pinecliff Park since it is a public space and close to Frederick. There was also consensus that the meeting would be facilitated by Hilari and that the Executive Committee with input from Janice and Sally would work on an agenda for the retreat that would be presented to the full Commission in October.

7. Vision and Mission Statements

Lisa Orr and Don Briggs presented their work on suggested vision and mission statements.

VISION – Version 1

A healthy Frederick County community sustained by a culture of collaborative action that ensures the prosperity of our people and the natural world on which we depend

VISION – Version 2

Frederick County is a healthy community sustained by a culture of collaborative action that ensures the prosperity of our people and the natural world on which we depend.

MISSION – Version 1

The Sustainability Commission advances integrated and measurable strategies for environmental, social and economic health for Frederick County, its partners and its people.

MISSION – Version 2

The Sustainability Commission accelerates the creation of a healthy and sustainable Frederick County by advancing measurable environmental, social and economic strategies for our government, its partners and its people.

Fred made a motion to adopt vision statement version one, which reads, “A healthy Frederick County community sustained by a culture of collaborative action that ensures the prosperity of

our people and the natural world on which we depend.” Annmarie seconded the motion and the commission voted 8-3-2 to adopt this as their vision statement.

The commission struggled with the mission statement. Margie expressed a concern that the mission statements placed “environmental, social and economic” equally whereas she believed the commission was established to work primarily on environmental issues. Winnie concurred with Margie. Naomi Bowers of the City of Frederick commented that environment, economy and society are the three pillars of sustainability and thought the Commission should keep the three together with equal weight. Lisa G. agreed. Lisa O. recommended that the Commission consider changing its name to be an Environmental Sustainability Commission. She agreed that their work was focused on environment first, with consideration for the economy and society/community. The commission could not come to consensus on a mission statement. Five members liked version 1 while 5 others liked version 2. It was decided that more work needed to be done on the mission statement.

Chairman Briggs said that the discussion of the mission could continue through the Google Group and email. Bylaws would also be tabled until the October meeting.

8. Public Comment

Tim and Leah Jones reported to the commission that the Green Expo had been moved to October 21-22, 2010. They asked for the commission’s support and partnership in the event.

Rich once again reminded everyone about the Solar Tour and Solar Decathlon. Lisa O. asked that the commission move the public comment period earlier in the meeting. Margie added that the Green Festival was coming to DC the weekend of October 16th. She would be heading down afternoon Sunday if anyone wanted to carpool.

9. Adjourn

Fred Ugast made a motion to adjourn at 5:20 pm. Lisa Gaver seconded the motion. All voted in favor.